

Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



Forgiveness

CUPBOARD LOVE—OR GENUINE?

HOME

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

LIFT YOUR HEADS, YE GATES

Megiddo Message

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Kenneth E. Flowerday, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone, The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will.

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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LETTERS

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Dear Gentlemen:

Your Booklet of Bible Study have turned more than one person to God.

They were really appreciated.
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

E. H. B.

With God on our Side

Dear Sister,

I am truly thankful to know God's plan for this earth.

"If, in this life only, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. It really does give one a happy feeling, if walking faithfully, to know that we shall be provided with the strength to plow straight ahead like your ocean liner, though the sea be calm or tempestuous—for the waters will not overwhelm us if the Lord is on our side."

Swansea, S. Wales, Eng.

R. B.

In the Fear of the Lord

Dear Sister:

If we would live in the fear of the Lord all the time, we would overcome our faults rapidly.

It is by obeying the Word of God that we do the work: He tells us just what to do, and what not to do. If we really believe, we will not be lingering by the way but will be pressing with all our mind, might and strength to be found ready: for the day of the Lord hasteth greatly.

"The Eternal deals justly with all: the upright fare well under him, but sinners fall."

Elgin, Oregon

Mrs. J. G.

On Christ's Birth

Intimate Friend,

It is unfortunate there are so few people which had come to understand the true date of Christ's birth and New Year and able to say something about it.

How this proves the Bible true for "Behold darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people (Isa. 60: 2).

We are not able to go and celebrate with you at the Megiddo Church which we love so well but we shall unite with you in prayer.

How happy we are to have been granted the spirit of faith and liberty to study the Words of the living God which are as pure as silver, tried in the furnace of earth, purified seven times (Psa. 12: 6).

May God grant you every means to spread, far and wide, the riches of Scripture Truth.
Windsor, Ont., Can.

C. T.

From a Long Time Reader

Dear Christian Friends,

Have been a reader of your wonderful paper and Bible studies for some time and find them a great help in Bible study.

May the Lord bless you in your wonderful work.

Pine Bluff, Ark.

Mrs. J. J. R.

Forgiveness

SINCE WE have all sinned, and the commandment is definite that we must confess our sins, the question presents itself, To whom must we confess? Well, that depends upon the nature of the transgression. The confessional, as practiced by the formal churches, is thoroughly unscriptural, being based upon the false doctrine of a succession of apostles with delegated power to forgive sins. As it seems to work out in actual practice, it is an endless round of sin and confess, sin and confess, go and sin some more, always hoping that the end of the way will find you in a position to make one last confession and receive final absolution.

Nevertheless, in spite of its unauthenticity and its abuses, the institution of audible confession fulfills a deep psychological need; and while our secret sins and our struggles with self may be confessed privately to our heavenly Father, we shall often find it helpful to "talk it out" with a trusted spiritual advisor, and then make a new start with a lighter heart. The personal counselor is as important to the health of the soul as the physician to the body, and more so. It goes without saying that an injury to another must be acknowledged to him or her personally, and that flagrant public offenses require public repentance.

Now we want to know who has power to forgive sins? To whom shall we go? To whom shall we confess? We must confess to God. We read in Psalm 103, our Scripture lesson: "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy . . . He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities . . . Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." Therefore, "let us . . . come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4: 16).

Forgiveness, A Possibility

"All have sinned, all come short of the glory of God," wrote the great Apostle to the Church at Rome (Rom. 3: 23, Moff.). It has been observed that if taken literally these words could mean that all have come short of meriting the eternal weight of glory which is the rightful heritage of only those who live in perfect obedience. But that approach is unscriptural. The familiar texts in Ezekiel 18 and 33 reveal the possibility for forgiveness. No matter what sins a person may have committed, that sin shall not stand against him once he has repented and turned from it. Ezekiel 33: 15, 16 reads: "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live." This is specific: sins confessed, repented of, and forgiven are wiped as completely from the slate as if they had never been committed. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," after we have *ceased to do evil, and*

learned to do well, as said the Almighty through the astute Isaiah.

The observation has been made that a contestant in a race forfeits the prize by one infraction of the rules. Now that may be true in a race that is so constituted, but not in this race for eternal life. With God, the runner is judged by his position at the termination of the race, not during the running. The fact that the runner on the race course may go on running yet he cannot receive the reward, is not true as applied to the Christian race. Forgiveness is a possibility. The divine arrangement is: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55: 7). After God has forgiven and abundantly pardoned, what more does one need to fit him for the weight of glory? But how could God forgive and abundantly pardon if one transgression of law disqualifies us for forgiveness? The folly of such a position is too obvious to be considered.

God's law does not demand perfect obedience throughout one's entire lifetime without one slip, but it does demand ultimate perfection of character *through growth*. Jesus our great Example "learned obedience by the things which he suffered," and God asks no more of us. The divine arrangement is: "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord."

The position that once we have sinned one small sin we have fallen short of the standard of perfect obedience, and have forfeited our right to the prize, might be true were it not for the process of forgiveness. One school of religious thought advances the foregoing proposition as evidence of man's helplessness in his effort to fit himself for salvation through his own efforts, making substitution in the form of the atoning work of Christ, essential. But it is not true. The Word of God is against it.

Achievement in any field comes through effort, likewise perfection of character is the sum-total of many years of trial, failure, thwarted attempts; coupled with dogged determination to win. It is achievement through growth, with the result, acceptance through forgiveness.

In King Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple he pinpointed the availability of forgiveness, and the principle on which it could be attained, in the following words: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chron. 7: 14).

Let us analyze, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves"—humility is the first of a series of virtues that must precede forgiveness. Without humility one could not condescend to ask God's forgiveness. "If my people . . . shall humble themselves, and pray"—humility must precede prayer, and prayer precede forgiveness. The self-confident man who would come to the throne of grace with the attitude of the typical Pharisee, who in his prayer enumerated his good

qualities, could not reasonably hope to be heard. "If my people, which are called by my name, . . . shall turn from their wicked ways." Here is the key to God's forgiveness. If my people will humble themselves, and pray, and "turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

The very first message to mankind, at the time of the glorious outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, was: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38). And a few days later Peter speaking to his countrymen, said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3: 19). Forgiveness, acceptance, and the blotting out of our sins will follow true conversion and repentance.

When Jesus appeared to Paul as he was on his way to Damascus with authority to apprehend the saints, his initial commission was to preach repentance that the people might receive forgiveness of sins. The commission was given: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26: 16-18). Forgiveness of sins is a possibility. God's mercy is great, yet it is selective. "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them" (Ps. 103: 17, 18).

Only God Can Forgive Sins Against Himself

Matthew 6: 14, 15, covers two phases of the divine plan for forgiveness. We must forgive men their trespasses in order for God to forgive us our trespasses. Let us first direct our attention to the factor of God as the great Forgiver of our sins. The text in question reads: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6: 14, 15).

When we contemplate elaboration on these words spoken by our Master we seem to have the feeling that we are treading, as it were, on holy ground, and are forced to realize the need of caution. These words and the words used in the Prayer, "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," are so constructed that it seems no comment is necessary. Truly, they are plain and understandable, with no allegorical meaning which might require many hours of study to fathom their mystery; but our meditation upon these texts, together with others pertaining to the subject of forgiving and forgiveness, may prove helpful to us. It may make us more aware of an important step which must be taken before we can be granted full salvation.

Because our iniquities separate us from God and hide His face from us that He will not hear our prayers (Isa. 59: 1, 2), we need to get into a state where we can secure forgiveness. Sin stands between us and God; it isolates us from Him, and in that state we cannot

approach Him with petitions either for temporal blessings or for the rewards of life eternal.

Sin, to be forgiven, must be forsaken.

Referring again to Isa. 1: 16-18, the Prophet infers that if we wash and cleanse from our sins, if we cease to do evil and learn to do well, then, though our sins had been red like crimson they shall be white as wool. God will pardon, He will forgive; all He asks is that we stop sinning, that we forsake our ways and thoughts and turn to Him with our whole heart (ch. 55: 6, 7).

It is right and proper that we ask forgiveness for our many sins, and more, we are commanded to do so. For it is only as we ask and expect to receive forgiveness according to His terms, that we shall make an effort to eliminate our sins.

There is a bit of history in Joshua 24 to which I would like to call your attention. "And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers." It was an important gathering. Joshua was growing old, this might be the last time his health would permit him to warn and encourage Israel, and he did not fail to make use of it. He had something of importance to say to the Twelve Tribes. And this message is just as important for us today.

"And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood [Jordan] in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (Josh. 24: 1, 2). Joshua sketched their history from Abraham to Isaac and Jacob, to their sojourn in Egypt, their deliverance by Moses when God worked so wondrously, to their crossing of the Jordan, the conquest of the nations in the land of Canaan, and the dividing of the land to them by lot.

Then, in the following words he pleaded with them to make the right choice, to serve the Lord and Him alone, as he also himself had done and would do. "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood [Jordan], and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (vs. 14, 15).

The people answered in the affirmative. They said: "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods." They were much like we many times are, "yes men." It was easier for them to say, "Yes, we will be loyal to God," even when they didn't really mean it, than face themselves in their true attitude. But Joshua was not to be taken off his guard in that way. He knew too well they were not sincere. And he said to the people, "Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins" (v. 19). God demands integrity, He demands wholeness, He demands sincerity. They were not sincere. Sin lay at their door which they had not confessed or made an earnest effort to forsake, hence God could not forgive. We should observe that on this occasion the

people presented themselves before God. That is the place to go to confess our sins.

What did Joshua mean when he said "Ye cannot serve the Lord"? What was the matter? They were trying to look through their own eyes, doing the things whatsoever seemed right to them and refused to fall into line with God's prophets and judges. "Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." But the key is in the next verse: "If, if, ye will not serve God 'If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good'" (v. 20). If, after you have been brought into a knowledge of the saving truth; if you add to or take from the word of God; or turn back in any way, you cannot serve the Lord, and He will not forgive your sins. You must serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and forsake your idols, not confess to a priest or some other human being.

Unless you are all of one mind you cannot serve the Lord, for He is a holy God, He is a jealous God; "He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." It is God who forgives on the condition of our coming out from the world, and being a separate and peculiar people, zealous of good works. The command is: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6: 17). Live in sincerity and truth. Do we want our sins blotted out, do we want God to forgive us? Then let us serve the Lord in sincerity and truth. If we do this, as certain as we are living beings—we need have no doubt—our sins and shortcomings will be blotted out.

Psalms 86: 5 contains a heart-strengthening promise: "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." We can rejoice that He is a God near at hand as well as a God afar off. We can rejoice that He is ready to forgive all who call upon Him. If sincere we need not fear that God will not hear our prayer, or that we cannot find Him. The promise is: "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29: 13).

A wise man of the world once said, "No man ever went successfully through any great enterprise whose earnestness did not amount to enthusiasm." If our seeking after God is to be successful, it too must be sincere, and the earnestness with which we seek Him must amount to enthusiasm. Seeking and finding God is not the work of a moment, nor a process that can be successfully accomplished without effort. Seeking and finding Him implies the taking of essential and consecutive steps: the acquisition of a knowledge of Him and His ways; conviction, application, perfection. It would be absurd for us to expect Him to recognize us unless we recognize His indisputable authority. It is for Him to speak, and for us to humbly listen; His to command, and ours to obey.

And once merited, God's forgiveness is abundant: "Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." (Ps. 130: 7). What a gracious promise! "With the Lord . . . is plenteous redemption."

(To be continued next issue)

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Our business in life is not to get ahead of others, but to get ahead of ourselves.

The New Year's Dawning

The rising of the Abib moon, herald of the sacred New Year, brought an unusual influx of visitors for the annual celebration at Megiddo Mission Church.

The first arrivals, who by miscalculation, had arrived and returned, were from Georgia; others came at staggering dates until the very hour of the New Year's dawning 6 P. M. April 15. Selma, Iowa; Rock Island, Illinois; Wausau, Wisconsin were represented; also St. Louis, Mo.; Carrollton, Ohio; two New Jersey towns. There was a goodly delegation from various points in New York State, and Canada, as well as visitors from Connecticut, Rhode Island, and West Virginia.

The principal feature of the celebration was a presentation in song, story, and living pictures entitled "We've a Story to tell to the Nations," depicting scenes from the life of Christ—His birth, childhood, youth and ministry, climaxed by a futuristic scene in Jerusalem—the world capital—of a happy conflux of resurrected pilgrims from the ages and latter day disciples as they meet and greet in joyous anticipation of the appearance from heaven of the King of all the Earth. There was seasonal music by the orchestra.

After a church dinner on Sunday noon, served in the basement, the children's program delighted the congregation. Of special mention was the children's orchestra whose cymbal player and youngest member (age 4) was something to see as well as to hear.

The happy faces and voices at the concluding number—the distribution of the gifts—expressed the delight of children whose lot is cast apart from the worldlings whose parents and oldsters think a frolicking Santa is necessary to mark the day they erroneously claim as the anniversary of the birth of Him who was born to one day reign as King of Earth.

On Thursday evening, April 27, being also the beginning of the 13th of Abib when Jesus instituted the New Passover, the Megiddo people met together to renew their covenant in partaking of the emblems which represent the eating of every word of God and living it out in our daily lives. This is a solemn covenant and should be accompanied by great searchings of heart, and followed by a godly life which will be approved in the Judgment Day and will prove to the world that we believe in its soon coming.

Sunday, April 30, will be observed as the true date of the resurrection, when Jesus Christ arose triumphant over the grave.

A Special morning service will be conducted in the Church.



Peace is not a monument
That stands upon a hill,
Nor a great tribunal
Awesome with its will.
Peace is binding up the wounds
Of friend and foe and brother;
Peace is found wherever folk
Are helping one another.

Cupboard Love--or Genuine?

"CUPBOARD LOVE" is the theme of a child's story which contains a good lesson for adults as well. It is about a little boy who always expected treats from those around him. To any friend who had something that he wanted, he would come very close and show much fondness; often saying, "I do love you so." Very often he would get just what he wanted. If the response was not as he expected, he would walk away with a wry face. This boy's desire for favors grew so strong that when he went to a neighbor's house, he would ask, "What have you got for me?" Actually the lad had a serious case of what may be called "cupboard love." It is "cupboard love" when our love for the giver is only pretense and our fruits manifest that our real esteem and appreciation is for the gift rather than the giver. Cupboard love is not genuine; it is selfish and deceitful.

We may say that this is but a childish trait, but it is also characteristic of human nature at any age. We need but to examine ourselves. Perhaps we find it easy to love our Heavenly Father when things are smooth and come our way, but when reverses come, is our love still the same—steady, faithful, genuine? Such earnest scrutiny and testing will show whether material things mean more to us than God. It will prove whether our love is cupboard love—or genuine.

How the Israelites rejoiced and sang songs of praise and thanksgiving to God for their great deliverance from Egypt and through the Red Sea! He gave them laws to obey and promised to be with them in all their wanderings through the wilderness, if they would keep all His statutes. As they marched on through the desert toward Canaan, God tested them. Life for them was different in the wilderness and it was not long after their deliverance that they began to murmur, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers and the melons, the leeks and the onions and the garlic. But, now, our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all besides this manna before our eyes." They would rather have died in Egypt, they said. Not only were they crying after food, but they wanted idols to worship as the nations around them. They remembered the exciting feasts the Egyptians had as they danced and sang around their idols of wood and stone. They wanted to do likewise, and many of them did. They forgot God, and God was greatly displeased with them. For this, God caused many of them to be destroyed in the wilderness.

This history of the Hebrews took place over three thousand years ago. It was caused to be written for our learning and warning, as Paul says, that we should not do as they did. We could bring this warning more up-to-date by substituting material things of the present for those things which they lusted after in their day. We, too, have been delivered from spiritual Egypt or darkness to serve God in truth and righteousness. If we love and obey Him in all things He will lead us through the wilderness, over Jordan and into the Promised Land. God, too, is testing us as we journey along. Will our love for Him prove genuine? Whether the road be rough or smooth, will our love be true and faithful? Will it carry us through to the Promised Land, or will mere things cause us to fall in the wilderness?

Cupboard love does not mean only the desire for unlawful things but the disposition to be continually expecting packages of good things. We find a precious illustration of love that is genuine in the prayer of Habakkuk, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Here was one who believed without seeing; one who loved God, the Great Giver, and not the gifts alone. He loved God in the absence of all these. God often does bless in the form of fruitful fields and flocks and folds, but He also uses adverse circumstances to humble us, to test and teach us, that we may become worthy in the end to enter into eternal life with all its immeasurable blessings.

It is evident that in Jesus' day there were some who manifested cupboard love. The five thousand whom Jesus had fed followed Him again the next day. Jesus knew that they were after the food, and said, "Ye seek me . . . because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." He taught them the lesson that they should care more for the spiritual good than for the natural good. It is the spiritual that will quicken us for the eternal life.

Then there were some of the Galatians, whose love for Paul and the Gospel he proclaimed burst like a bubble. First, they received him as an angel of God, even as Christ. At one time they would have plucked out their very eyes and given them to him. Paul continued to preach to them the true gospel, challenging the false, and before long they looked upon him as an enemy. Paul was very sorry and he sought them not to walk after the flesh, not to seek vain glory but to let the spirit of truth govern them in all things.

What an example Paul was! His love for God was indeed genuine. It amounted to enthusiasm which never burned out. He counted all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, for the power of His resurrection. He reached forward, not after material things but for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We can see a sharp contrast between Paul and the children of Israel, who murmured in the wilderness, and the multitude, who were interested in the loaves and fishes. Paul was unselfish, never concerned about his own comforts, thinking only that sin might be put to death in himself and that he might be found not having his own righteousness but the righteousness of God.

It may be, that each of us has at some time manifested cupboard love, pretending love to God but much concerned about our own comfort, our food and clothes, our time and plans, our recreation or hobbies. All of these may be good and lawful, but, when they invariably seem to be the first thought in our lives, our love for God is but cupboard love. It will never take us into the Promised Land. Our Master left word; "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We can grow more and more in our love for God

(Continued on page 9)

THE PROSPERITY OF THE PIOUS

Psalm One

Blessed is the man who hath not walked astray
 In counsel of the wicked, and in way
 Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
 Of scorners hath not sat. But in the great
 Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
 And in His law he studies day and night.
 He shall be as a tree which planted grows
 By watery streams, and in his season knows
 To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
 And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
 Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fanned
 The wind drives; so the wicked shall not stand
 In judgment, or abide their trial then,
 Nor sinners in the assembly of just men.
 For the Lord knows the upright way of just;
 And the way of bad men to ruin must.

"Price"

It is said that in the jungles the never-ending battles were not against the larger and fiercer wild animals and snakes, but the smaller things, "creatures that cannot be fought—the malaria mosquitoes, the poisonous insects, the tiny snakes, the tropical storms, the whirlpools, the sleeping crocodiles, and a thousand and one other small dangers which one must ever be on guard against if he is to live. They breed the haunting fear that perhaps some moment he will be careless, that tomorrow or the next day he will make the slip that will mean the end."

The world is a spiritual jungle in which we all are traveling. In it we find that it is not the big enemies in which we stand in the greatest danger of losing our self-control, but the little things that lurk in the dark recesses of our nature: the poisoner of the blood, the temper uncontrolled, the unruly tongue which shoots out the venom of bitter words, the lust for forbidden things, the foolish or injurious word, the unholy thought, the wasted moment.

Eternal vigilance is the price of peace as well as of liberty.

In order to be true peacemakers we have to make peace with God first; submit to His law, allow it to control our thoughts and actions each day, then help others do the same. A peacemaker is usually one who goes between two factions. And we have to first get at peace with God ourselves. That is the definition of a true peacemaker.

"Lead on, O King Eternal till sin's fierce war shall cease and holiness shall echo the sweet amen of peace."

Certainly sin does put up a terrible battle. It is a fierce battle against sin. If it doesn't show up one way it does another. We start in thinking we are going to live the day all right, but first thing something comes and we have not done as we should or spoke as we should, and a fierce battle is on. But if we keep at it then holiness shall echo the sweet amen of peace.

Few things are more gratifying and pleasing as we move in and out among our fellow men than an exhibition of good manners, the good manners that are born of a regard for other peoples' feelings and comfort. The hearty "Thank you," or words of appreciation for some passing kindness, however trivial, has a cheering, helpful effect and may enthrust others to follow the example.

"It was only a glad 'Good morning' as she passed along the way.

"But it spread the morning's glory over the livelong day." The secret of good manners is kind thought for others. The kindly action, the gracious word, the pleasant smile, the deference to age on the part of youth, are things that contribute to the beauty and comfort of life, and they spring from one source—the heart. Happiness is impossible without some regard for happiness of others and can so often be fostered by the smallest acts of kindness, acts that become instinctive and part of our nature if practised from day to day. Let each try to cultivate the charm of thoughtful, kind manners and so radiate sunshine and good will.

***Procrastination***

Today may be the last day,
 The night may never come,
 Or, coming, be eternal,
 As it will be for some
 Who fall asleep unmindful
 That death is very near,
 All unprepared to answer
 The trumpet, sounding clear.

Today may be the last day
 Your fruits of love to bring;
 And can you offer freely
 While still to self you cling?
 First, cast aside your idols;
 A full surrender make;
 And have no earthly treasure
 That you will not forsake.

Postpone not till tomorrow
 The good deeds still undone;
 For how can you be certain
 You'll see another sun?
 Remember that the Saviour
 Tonight may claim His own,
 And none will be rewarded
 With life but those full grown.

So end procrastination,
 Resolved to do today
 The things of you demanded—
 Your obligations pay.
 'Tis better to be ready,
 And be compelled to wait,
 Than to be told by Jesus,
 "Depart! you are too late."



Every step toward Christ kills a doubt. Every thought, word and deed for Him carries you away from discouragement.

Home

A COLUMNIST who writes for a Rochester paper received the inspiration for one of his columns from a remark made to him by a doctor with whom he was talking. Said the doctor:

"When the center lamp and the center table in the living room went out, something of real value went out of the American home."

The writer comments: "That something to me was domestic companionship. I remember my own home when I was young. Home was where we *lived*, not a retreat reluctantly returned to after every place down town had closed for the night. We lived in it and didn't use it as a boardinghouse. In it and around it was almost everything that was near and dear and vital to us.

"We sat at this center table after supper (we always had supper, not dinner, at night in those days) by a sort of magnetic attraction, not under an order, and there was no conscious formality about it. We lived around the center lamp in the wintertime.

"People weren't fidgety in those days as they are now. We didn't have to be continually 'going places' . . . In the daytime we might range far afield . . . but at night, home; usually under the living room lamp. Apples in the big bowl on the dining room table and the latest copies of current periodicals to carry us through the evening.

"And our house was like almost every other house I knew along that street. They all had a lamp on the center table each with a Welsbach burner. You'd pull a short chain, and lo! the bright light sprang up. We thought it very wonderful. . ."

The writer then gives an outline of how young girls and boys in their teens (who should be home doing their home work) spend their evenings at stay-up-late places, smoking cigarettes and sometimes acting very silly as the result of drinking beverages which legally should have been denied them.

The gentleman deplors the retrogression in American life and the change which has taken place in the home since he was a boy around the center table on which stood the lamp with the Welsbach burner. No serious-minded, thoughtful person could fail to see, and if honest, acknowledge that for years the trend has been downward with ever-increasing speed.

The most vital thing that ever went out of the home is Religion. When its restraining, cementing influence waned, the foundation of the home began to crumble. When reverence for a Superior Being ceased to be inculcated, when daily reading of the Scriptures ceased, when the prayer of thanksgiving before meals was no longer heard, something happened to the home. Waves of moral laxity started to roll, which are inundating and undermining not the foundation of the home only but that of the nation; for it has truly been said that no nation can rise higher than its homes and womankind.

The god of pleasure has had myriads of worshipers, and at this shrine all classes have bowed with but little restraint, just as St. Paul in writing to Timothy of the perilous times which should come in the last days said they would be doing: "For men shall be lovers of their

own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy . . . traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (II Tim. 3: 1-4).

But looking away from the shadowy picture of crumbling nations and cherished institutions, what do we behold? Through the eye of faith we view the dawning of a brighter Day: a day when earth shall be at peace; a day when all peoples shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks; when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; a day when they shall sit every man under his own vine and fig tree, and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. A day when God's will shall be done in earth as it is done in Heaven, when every knee shall bow to Him and every tongue sing to His praise; a day when He shall swallow up death in victory and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from all faces; a day when the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. A day when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; when from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same the Lord's name shall be praised.

We take comfort in our present homes, but ever over them hovers the phantom of uncertainty, and we know not when a power whose hand we cannot stay may enter our dwelling. But we do know that every one who, day by day, is bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, becoming crucified to the world, can say as did the apostle Paul, "For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Abraham rejoiced in the same hope. We read of him that "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Of this City we read in Rev. 21: 23, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." We also read, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." "Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him"—rivers of pleasures, a place and a name better than of sons and daughters, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

All this, and more than we can ask or think, will be the portion of all who are willing to pay the purchasing price which centuries ago was made known to Abraham, as recorded in Gen. 17: 1. The price has never changed; all alike, whether rich or poor, must pay the price in its entirety for this most wonderful home which will endure eternally. No storm, flood or fire can destroy it, and Death can never enter. All within is joy supernal, happiness supreme!

The Importance of Little Things

"I AM LOOKING for a smart man to fill an important post," said a business man to a friend, "do you know of one that would suit me?" "Yes," was the reply, "go up and see young Jones of the Electric Store, he's just the man for you." "Right," said the business man, "I'll go and see him."

A couple of days later they met again. "Well," asked the friend, "did you engage Jones?" "No," was the reply, "I went to the store and made a couple of purchases, and he waited on me, but I didn't engage him. In the first place, when he wrapped up my parcels he used twice as much paper as was necessary, which may seem a trifle, but in a large business would cause a lot of waste in a year. In the second place, he didn't wrap the parcels in the right way, which is again a small thing, but showed the man was careless."

We are well aware that the alert business man is keenly alive as to what kind of material he selects in order to make his business a success, and he quickly recognizes the good qualities in an individual as well as the undesirable ones; and the faithful performance of small duties wins recognition in the long run though these duties may at times be irksome and of a menial nature, but invariably they prove stepping-stones to promotion and success. The Woolworth Building is a massive towering structure, but it represents nickles and dimes. The moments are little things, yet they compose hours, days, weeks, months, years, and an endless eternity.

So to the young in years we would say, Watch the little things and remember whatsoever is worth doing is worth doing well. Watchful eyes may be making observations. Work from principle, which means being honest and working just as faithfully when you are alone as when your employer is around. A good verse to remember is found in Prov. 15: 3, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." In Ps. 139: 4 we read: "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether."

In Ezek. 11: 5 the Lord tells us, "I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them," and in I Sam. 2: 3 we are told that "the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." Now if God knows every word in our tongues and every thought that comes into our minds and weighs our actions by the standard of His Word, how diligent and watchful we should be to have them right. A good verse to commit to memory is in II Chron. 16: 9 "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."

Such a lovely chain of thoughts, if we link them all together, to help us to be faithful in the little things! If we are faithful to the Heavenly Master we cannot be otherwise to an earthly employer, and God has promised us, if we will serve Him, more than eye hath seen or ear heard or has entered into the heart of man to conceive of. Let us render faithful service.

Watch the little things—they count.

The Good and Bad of It

It's a fine old world to live in
When the weather's keeping fair;
And the weak alone are driven
To destruction or despair;
It's a fine old world to grin in
But a poor old world to sin in
And a fine old world to win in
For the sake of "getting there."

It's a fine old world to hope in
If our purposes are high,
But a poor old world to grope in,
For the ones who fear to try;
It's a fine world to believe in
But a poor old place to grieve in,
And a fine world to achieve in,
Whether it be wet or dry.

It's a fine old world to work in
For the things that should be won,
But a poor old place to shirk in
While so much remains undone;
It's a good world to belong in,
And a fine world to be strong in,
But a poor place to go wrong in;
Don't ignore that fact, my son.

Cupboard Love--or Genuine?

(Continued from page 6)

and righteousness, if we keep our minds on high things, continually emulating such faithful characters as Paul, Jesus, Jeremiah, Daniel and Moses. When God has proved us and sees our hearts are set on eternal things; that we are all wrapped up in laying up treasures in heaven, treasures of love, joy, peace, patience, meekness, long-suffering and unselfishness, then, there is no doubt that He will open the windows of Heaven and pour us out a blessing.

What joy will be ours, to be found with the faithful on that evergreen shore where life and joy and blessings will flow for evermore.

The Lord Jesus gave us the example in this also. He sought not temporal gain or reward—mere "cupboard" things. He endured all "for the joy that was set before him"—for the abundant store of a boundless eternity.

It will do wonders for us if we exchange our ways and thoughts for the Lord's. It will do for us what no other system on earth can do. A person could be the greatest scientist, doctor, industrialist on earth, still they wouldn't have to have the highest standard of morality, as exchanging our thoughts for God's. So it will do wonders for us now and in the age to come it will fit us to be made equal unto the angels to never die. It will do something that we can enjoy our labor through all eternity if we accomplish that work.

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Put obligations above rights.

Meditations

On the Word

"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10: 20).

This incident in Jesus' relation with His followers gives us a fair sample of His practical approach to the problem of Christian living. However great their rejoicing over the influence for good they had had over others, their concern over their own salvation should be paramount.

In Luke 9: 1, 2 we read the account of where He sent out His twelve disciples, giving "them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick."

In chapter 10, in addition to the Twelve, Jesus had chosen seventy others to go two by two before Him into every city He Himself would visit. He had given them specific commands as to how they should conduct themselves. They were to make choice of their temporary headquarters by the worthiness of the householder and his family, and once located they were to remain at the same address until their mission at that place was completed. They were to carry no food, no money, nor an extra pair of shoes; "for the laborer is worthy of his hire." And upon departing from a city where they were not received, they should shake the very dust from their feet as a testimony against the inhabitants.

Jesus also had armed them with extraordinary powers so they could prove the genuineness of their mission. The narrative does not indicate whether these powers to the Seventy were as broad as those intrusted to the Twelve, but they were at least broad enough that they were to heal all the sick in the places they visited. And these were real cures, too, not the pretended ones of those claiming the power of God these days.

If seventy men so equipped should start out today to tour an area about the size of one of the smaller States of the Union, what a stir they could make. Every sick or ailing person could be cured, the sufferers in every hospital healed and returned to normal life, the inmates of all the mental hospitals released, permanently cured. The reaction to such a phenomenon would be enormous, and the buoyancy of the workers themselves, transporting.

It was under just such circumstances as these that the Seventy were reporting to the Great Teacher, and while we cannot believe that He would purposely do or say anything to discourage them, or make an attempt in any way to belittle or disparage their work, His insight into the weaknesses of human nature was such that He knew they needed the lesson and He determined not to let pass an opportunity to impress it. The power to heal others was something to thrill about, but to save themselves was far more important.

Someone has remarked that the Christian religion is a selfish religion, for it demands that the saving of self must come first. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt

both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4: 16). In the final analysis, we only can work out our individual salvation, form for ourselves characters worthy of perpetuation. We can help save others by showing a godly example, by speaking a timely word of warning and encouragement. In the same way others can assist us in overcoming the evils of our nature, but only we ourselves can make the decision to throw our whole mind, might and strength into the service of the Lord, so we may know to a certainty our names will be written in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life.

Having our names written in heaven, or in the book of life, is of sufficient importance that the Almighty saw fit to move upon Prophet, Apostle, as well as His Son Jesus, to tell us how to do the writing. Malachi 3: 16 states the formula comprehensively: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

First, we must fear or reverence the Word or command of the Eternal, and this will impel us to speak often to each other, not only of the great and precious promises held out to us frail mortals, but pre-eminently of the things we must do to obtain those blessings. And what a comforting assurance that the Almighty will hearken and pay attention to such speaking and cause a "book of remembrance" to be written.

Deliverance and needed protection are assured all such: "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels [special treasure, margin]; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. 3: 17). This promise also is reiterated in Dan. 12: 1, "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince . . . there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." A great time of trouble is coming upon the earth, a time of God's judgments when sin and all sinners shall be swept away, it will be very important then to have our names written in heaven.

In First Corinthians 13: 1-7 the great Apostle impresses a lesson quite similar to one Jesus taught the Seventy as expressed in our meditation verse. There is something of greater importance than to have the spirits (that is, evil spirits, as diseases of body and mind were called), subject to us. Charity, or love of God, daily self-control, is the only virtue that will result in our names being written in heaven. The Apostle states his case with great clearness: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." He then defines charity: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; . . . vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. . . Charity never faileth."

Questions and Answers



"After Jesus' being crucified, don't they [Christians] have to repent of their sin to be saved by grace?"

Yes indeed, Peter was very specific about this when shortly after Pentecost, he said to some of his countrymen; "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses . . . And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers . . . Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3: 14, 15, 17, 19). He submitted to His murderers not as the world's redeemer as is popularly taught, but to complete His own obedience to his Father's will.

"Please explain Matthew 27: 50-53?"

This reads in the A. V.: "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

We believe this to have been literally true. These "saints" must have been individuals acquainted with Jesus and known to the generation living in Jerusalem. They were raised to bear witness in a striking manner to the resurrection of Jesus.

We prefer the reading of Goodspeed's translation as more intelligible: ". . . and many of the saints who had fallen asleep rose . . . and after his resurrection went into the holy city" etc. The "rising" would be at the crucifixion and death of the Master, as Matthew places it, in order to be witnesses of these events. The evident purpose of their resurrection was to witness to Jesus' resurrection. As it was not the day of Judgment they were, undoubtedly raised to mortal life only and returned to the grave in due time. It was one of the miracles peculiar to that era.

"Does Oral Roberts, who appears on television, get his healing power from God, as he claims?"

No, he does not! No man on earth has possessed that power since the close of the Apostolic age, A. D. 70. The power given at Pentecost was entrusted to men for a limited time and ceased by limitation. We learn from I Cor. 13: 8-10, that ". . . whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." The Holy Spirit was given to confirm the apostles' word until the "perfect," the completed law of God (Ps. 19: 7), should come.

Joel 2 projects a former and latter rain or outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2 Peter testified that the outpouring they were then witnessing was the "early" rain, and that the "latter" rain should come at the last day. Between these two rains there would be a dry spell. We are yet in the dry spell; hence neither Oral Roberts nor any other man or woman has power to heal by the Holy

Spirit. The coming of Elijah, the herald, quickly followed by Christ Himself, will usher in the latter rain (Matt. 17: 11). Then much greater works shall be done than Jesus did at His first advent (John 14: 12). Until that day dawns, only faith, hope and charity abide (I Cor. 13: 8).

"Please explain to me what Rev. 1: 8 really means."

The text in question reads: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." This text refers to God, the Almighty, and not to Christ. The train of thought from v. 4 on reveals this. Verse 4 reads "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne." The Almighty Himself is here indicated. Verse 5 continues: "And from Jesus Christ" etc. Verses 6 and 7 also clearly refer to Christ, the writer's train of thought ending with "Amen."

Verse 8 obviously refers again to God: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." God is the speaker in this verse as in Rev. 21: 6, where again He calls Himself the "Alpha and the Omega." "The man of Patmos must assert eternal providence if his message is to have weight and authentic power. So it is declared that he represents the One who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. It is the One who is the Origin and the Conclusion of everything who sends the message to the churches. Just this sense of finality must belong to the Christian message today. If it does not come out of the very life of God it will not be effective in the life of men" (Interpreter's Bible).

"What happened to Enoch?"

Genesis 5: 24 indicates that he departed from earth without experiencing death. "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Had Enoch died, that would have been no different than other men of his time who passed from earth by way of death, and should have merited no mention. Obviously Enoch's departure was different, by translation, as with Elijah the prophet of Israel. Some schools of religious thought would refute this position.

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One very hopeful thought: we can live in this world uncontaminated by evil if we will. God has not asked us to do something beyond us. He has asked us to live in the world uncontaminated by it. It really can be done. Jesus prayed His disciples would not be taken out of the world but kept from the evil in the world, so it is possible for each of us to live in the world and not be contaminated by it.

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The Christian has greatly the advantage of the unbeliever, having everything to gain and nothing to lose.

Lift Your Heads, Ye Gates

When the fog has lifted . . . And the vail is rent in twain . . . And the darkness o'er the earth . . . Has been dispelled by light . . . When the clouds are rifted . . . With all secret things made plain . . . We shall see the King of Glory . . . In His power and might . . . Lift up your heads, ye gates . . . And let the King of Glory in! . . . Stand ye so complacent, while . . . He waits the welcome note? . . . Raise the standard higher . . . Move to meet the hosts of sin . . . And let your shouts of victory . . . To every nation float . . . Lift up your heads, ye gates . . . And let the King of Glory in . . . He will lead in battle . . . Till the foe is put to flight . . . Step in line behind Him . . . And the summit you will win . . . Where you can behold the glories . . . Of the City bright . . . With the King of Glory . . . As your Captain, who can fail? . . . In His presence timid ones . . . Grow bold, the weak grow strong . . . So unhesitatingly . . . The forts of sin assail . . . With a smile upon your lips . . . And in your heart a song . . . He is coming soon, the . . . King of Glory, in His might . . . Coming, o'er the earth to reign . . . Distributing its stores . . . Lift up your head, ye gates . . . Rejoicing at the welcome sight . . . And let the King of Glory in . . . Ye everlasting doors . . .

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